



La Prensa San Diego

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Ben Hueso, City Council President, a significant day for San Diego's Hispanics

San Diego City Councilperson Ben Hueso has been elected the council president which is a personal achievement for Hueso and is significant for the Hispanic community in general. Ben Hueso is now the second most powerful politician in the city and has elevated his constituency base beyond District 8 to now representing the whole city.

Hueso's rise to prominence is all the more impressive when you consider that just four years ago in 2004 he was losing his first campaign for San Diego Unified School Board to Luis Acle. Acle proved to be a disaster as a school board member and Hueso, in 2006, ran for city council. Hueso won the seat in the primary overwhelming a relatively weak field of candidates and it has been straight to the top ever since.

Hueso has developed a political base that includes friends such as former Assembly speaker Fabian Núñez and Lorena Gonzalez CEO/President of the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council. Along with being appointed president of the city council he was also appointed to the California Coastal Commission this year. These two positions and as council representative of District 8 makes Hueso, next to Mayor Sanders, the most influential person in San Diego and positions him for higher office in the near future.

Hueso has also carved out a distinct political path that earned him his present position from being a strong opponent to Mike Aguirre's reelection campaign to earning at least the respect of the environmental coalitions that at first op-

posed his appointment to the Coastal Commission. Hueso at times has shown an independent streak and at other times has been a team player. Friends and colleagues say Hueso is not your typical politician, with his strong suit being a person with a good heart, honest, and with good intentions.

But clearly this is a significant step for the Hispanic community in San Diego. Hueso has risen to a position of influence that to date no other Hispanic can claim. Hueso's election demonstrates a continuing development of the political significance of the Hispanic community and when you couple this with the role that Labor Council President Lorena Gonzalez plays in local politics, you are seeing the growth of a political base within the local Hispanic community that is a precursor of the political future for the city and the state.

Lorena Gonzalez has already proven her mettle and is a leader who will be a key player for years to come. Ben Hueso now must help guide the City of San Diego through some very difficult times that will test him beyond anything else he has done politically. How Hueso handles his council duties will determine his political future. How Hueso helps to develop the Hispanic political base in San Diego will go a long way in determining the future for this community.

As a Hispanic, Hueso is in a unique position to help the Hispanic community realize its full political potential. The question is will he take on this role? The Hispanic community will be watching, waiting, and hoping for change!